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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 006303

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT, FOR, G/TIP, G, INL, DRL, EUR/PGI, EUR/SE

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SUBJECT: ANKARA'S NEW TIP SHELTER -- MUNICIPALITY SETS A

FINE EXAMPLE

Classified By: PolCouns Janice G. Weiner for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The first Ankara Trafficking in Persons (TIP) shelter, second in Turkey after Istanbul, will start accepting victims of trafficking (VOTs) by the end of October. The Ankara Municipality has delivered a first-rate shelter, totally renovated and furnished, and has offered to pay for some utilities. The Women's Solidarity Foundation (WSF), winner of an International Office of Migration (IOM) tender to run the shelter, may not be the right choice, but under IOM's direction will be able to function sufficiently well. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) Chief Advisor to Ankara Mayor Melih Gokcek, Murat Dogru, advised us that Gokcek, in response to pressure from Ambassador Faruk Logoglu, has donated a shelter for victims of trafficking (VOTs) in Ankara. The Ankara Municipality has provided two adjoining townhouses in a quiet neighborhood in western Ankara and sunk over 150,000 USD in materials and countless man-hours into renovating and furnishing the shelter.

¶3. (C) IOM awarded NGO Women's Solidarity Foundation (WSF) the tender to run the shelter, despite our warnings that the WSF has previously tried to run several battered women's shelters in Ankara, only to have Mayor Gokcek shut them down due to claims of prostitution in the shelters. WSF President Gulsen Ulker Al vehemently denies the charges. IOM awarded the tender to WSF in order to broaden NGO capacity in the trafficking field. IOM expects the shelter will start accepting VOTs by the end of October.

¶4. (U) The Ankara Shelter is in prime condition, both inside and out. Wrought iron fencing surrounds the property. Security cameras monitor the entrance and smoke detectors are located in key areas of the shelter. The shelter includes a small backyard where VOTs may maintain a garden if they like. Two balconies off upstairs bedrooms have been enclosed by glass panels, making the space more functional.

¶5. (U) The ground floor of the shelter houses two administrative offices for WSF, each furnished with a desk and computer, wall art and a kilim. Staff monitor the security cameras from one of the offices.

¶6. (U) The shelter also has a kitchen, outfitted with brand-new appliances, a laundry room, and a living room supplied with a large-screened television and computer area with three computers with flat-screened monitors. The municipality has provided internet and cable television hookup. WSF plans to teach computer literacy courses to VOTs who express an interest.

¶7. (U) Upstairs are six bedrooms with room for 12 VOTs (one room with two sets of bunkbeds, three rooms with two single beds, and two rooms with single beds). The shelter has an official capacity of 10, however. The municipality also included bed linens, pillows and bright yellow bedspreads, along with clothes wardrobes. One bedroom has a small television. Two full-sized bathrooms with new fixtures complete the upstairs floorplan.

¶8. (U) The Municipality has offered to pick up the tab for water, natural gas, cable TV and high-speed internet service. WSF is responsible for electricity and telephone usage.

¶9. (C) COMMENT: The Ankara TIP shelter is impressive. The Ankara Municipality has gone out of its way to provide a modern and functional TIP shelter, the first in Ankara and second in Turkey (Human Resource Development Foundation runs one in Istanbul). WSF, however, is not so impressive. Murat Dogru has told us that the Municipality will not interfere with the running of the shelter. IOM, on the other hand, will be watching WSF's every move. Hence, there is a good chance that mistakes will be dealt with immediately, before they can become serious problems. END COMMENT.

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